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SUBJECT: CLIMATE CHANGE AND COASTAL ZONES- REGIONAL UPDATE

SUMMARY

¶1. Climate change, coastal zone, and fisheries issues are increasingly addressed in unison as dominant variables in an equation including politics, economics, social themes, security, and biodiversity. During a recent TDY to Senegal and Cape Verde, the REO met with host nation contacts, United Nations Development Program (UNDP) representatives, USAID Senegal, and members of the African Partnership Station (APS) team. END SUMMARY.

CLIMATE CHANGE

¶2. The meetings with the UNDP representatives were especially insightful. The UNDP message was clear and concise on all fronts: Climate Change is a development issue and the four pillars to the UNDP strategy to combat climate change are: 1) Capacity building, 2) Adaptation, 3) Mitigation, and 4) Mainstreaming. Mr. Benoit Lebot, UNDPs Regional Technical Advisor who is based in Dakar and Mr. Christophe Nutall, Director Hub for UNDP Innovative Partnerships, based in Geneva, conveyed the same message during separate meetings and again during a conference in Dakar on February 6, 2009 to discuss the potential influence that a territorial collaboration can have on the national front. Several speakers at the conference referenced the State of California and its "exemplary climate change initiatives" and the new world Climate Change context given by President Obama when he referred to the significant role he is giving to individual United States when to address climate change issues.

¶3. Mr. Nutall noted that Margret Kim, Senior International Climate Policy Advisor and China's Program Director of the California Air resources Board, is working with the with the UN to develop UN-California strategy with associations of regions including the Climate Group to advocate the roles of States, Regions and Provinces for a Kyoto II type mechanisms. Ms. Kim is scheduled to be in New York on 23 February 2009 to explore next steps in sub-national collaboration with United Nations Climate Change officials.

¶4. The UNDP representatives in Praia, Mrs. Eunice Gomes and Mr. Jose Levy, reiterated the same message as their colleagues in Dakar. The path forward involves capacity building, education on adaptation, mitigation and the mainstreaming of climate change initiatives into all economic sectors. NOTE: Cape Verde continues to move forward with renewable energy initiatives. Praia seems to be fully committed to the non binding pledges submitted during WIREC 2008 to increase electricity production via renewable energy sources. Mr. Rito Manuel Evora of the Agency of Economic Regulation noted during his meeting with the REO that Cape Verde is moving forward with the development of four wind parks with a total electrical generating capacity of 28 megawatts on four separate islands. It was not clear if U.S. companies are involved in the bidding process to supply components and or construct these wind parks during this meeting. It did seem as if the host nation entities recently cleared certain internal administrative hurdles but the project seems to be in the planning stages. The project schedule was not available at the time of the meeting. END NOTE.

COASTAL ZONES AND FISHERIES

¶5. The lack of sustainable integrated coastal zone management and sustainable fisheries management combine to: feed the concerns of many, fuel tension between some, and continue to generate illicit profits for a select few. Beach sand mining (supporting the construction industry in some of the major coastal urban centers in West and Central Africa) and illegal fishing continue to reduce the biodiversity in the coastal zone and in the marine fisheries environment. In Dakar, USAID Senegal hosted an interagency forum on integrated coastal resources management with DoD, AFRICOM, NOAA, and others to capture the essence of the multiple USG efforts in the region and to promote the coordination of future efforts in the coastal zone to improve biodiversity and to combat illegal fishing.

¶6. Estimates indicate that illegal fishing costs Africa around \$1 billion annually due to lost revenue. There is rising concern over shrinking fish stocks related to the overall food security concern, and illicit fishing can and in some cases does support other illicit maritime activity in the region. The Senegalese Director for Maritime Surveillance and Protection provided an overview of his organization's mission, which is to provide monitoring, control and surveillance along Senegalese Coast. The director seemed optimistic about improved multinational cooperation with Guinea Bissau and he projected there would be a regulatory tax designed to support improved vessel monitoring and a scheme to aid fishermen in fielding vessel borne marine safety kit (currently underdevelopment. COMMENT: The director for surveillance and detection was reluctant to discuss the challenges associated with blending the maritime and artisanal fisheries policies. He did cite the need for increased capacity building and support to improve coastal and offshore monitoring. He seemed genuinely appreciative of the USG efforts and the AFRICOM/African Partnership Station visit to Senegal. The opportunity to support improved scientific partnerships would complement operational capacity building efforts. A combination of science and pragmatic partnerships could, if crafted and coordinated with sustainability in mind, serve to empower the technical specialists, devise pilot project successes, and ultimately reinforce, to the policy makers, the need for integrated coastal and marine policy, which promotes sustainable biodiversity management. END COMMENT.

¶7. For further discussion contact Geoffrey Hunt at +233-21-741- 417 or Patience Charway at +233-21-741-839.

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